



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



RED SHIRT FRIDAY EVENT TO RECOGNIZE DEPLOYED SERVICE MEMBERS

South Dakota employers, schools, and residents are encouraged to show their support for all service members deployed overseas by participating in R.E.D. (Remember Everyone Deployed) Shirt Friday.

The South Dakota National Guard, Ellsworth Air Force Base and the S.D. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve invites the public to participate by wearing a red shirt on all Fridays while South Dakota citizens are deployed to remember and honor all members of the military for their service to the state and nation.



An August 25 R.E.D. event is being held to highlight the nearly 125 members of the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing currently deployed overseas. Throughout the past year, the SDNG has been highlighting deployed units and individual members during R.E.D Friday events.

"Wearing red shirts on Fridays sends a strong and unified message to our service members and families that they are not forgotten and we appreciate their sacrifice to our country," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "Wearing a red shirt is a simple gesture, but the meaning behind it is significant."

Gov. Dennis Daugaard has demonstrated his support by signing a proclamation announcing all Fridays South Dakota citizens are deployed in harm's way to be R.E.D. Shirt Friday in South Dakota.

Currently, there are more than 300 South Dakota Army and Air National Guard members and about 550 Airmen from Ellsworth Air Force Base deployed to various locations around the globe.

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LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE POST-9/11 GI BILL EDUCATION BENEFITS FOR VETERANS SIGNED INTO LAW

President Trump signed into law the *Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017*. Our veterans have made incredible sacrifices for our country, and they should be able to fully use the benefits they've been promised when they enter civilian life.

The *Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017* makes much-needed updates for reservists, Purple Heart recipients, veterans who face school closures while enrolled and surviving family members. The legislation also provides increased resources and authority for educational assistance to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs, computer programming and career technical training.

Most significantly, this bill recognizes our country's need for an agile and adaptable workforce and that American workers need to be lifelong learners. For that purpose, this bill eliminates the arbitrary 15-year period within which a veteran is required to use their GI Bill so they can use their benefits at any time in their professional career.

The legislation is named in honor of Harry Walter Colmery, an Army Air Service veteran and former national commander of the American Legion who drafted the original GI Bill in 1944 to improve the transition for World War II Veterans back to civilian life.



VA HOTLINE

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced the two-month pilot phase of the new White House VA Hotline which began in June has demonstrated that veterans calling the hotline respond best when their calls are answered by fellow veterans and others with first-hand experience on their issues.

As a result, the VA announced that it will target highly qualified veterans to staff the hotline going forward, instead of contracting the service to a third-party vendor, and is hiring additional VA personnel to complete the planned move to a 24-hour operation.

This decision will delay the full-time stand-up of the 24-hour service by two months, to no later than October 15, in order to ensure the hiring and training processes are complete.

Until that time, the hotline's current pilot program service is available to receive calls from veterans from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. The number is: 855-948-2311.

SD CIVIL AIR PATROL TO HOLD AEROSPACE EXTRAVAGANZA THIS WEEKEND

Aerospace education is one of the three congressionally mandated missions of the Civil Air Patrol. This coming weekend aircraft and vehicles will bring officers and cadets from across the state to Sioux Falls to participate in the South Dakota Wing's Aerospace Extravaganza for 2017.

The mission base will be at the headquarters of the Sioux Falls Composite Squadron at the Sioux Falls Regional Airport. From there cadets will have the opportunity to fly on powered aircraft orientation flights in and around Sioux Falls area. In addition, cadets will be ferried in groups to Worthington, MN where they will participate in glider orientation flights.

While waiting for their turn to fly in the aircraft and gliders the cadets at mission base will take part in a plethora of activities including building and test flying balsa-wood model gliders, building and launching model rockets, fly radio-controlled model powered aircraft and model powered gliders, fly computer flight simulators, receive instruction in how control surfaces affect flight dynamics.

Also included in the weekend's activity is a guided tour of the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing facility at Joe Foss Field.

Project Officers for the Aerospace extravaganza are Lt. Col. Todd Epp, commander of the Sioux Falls Composite squadron, and Lt. Col. Buck DeWeese, vice commander of the South Dakota Wing of the Civil Air Patrol. Epp can be contacted at 605-351-5021 and DeWeese at 605-641-2362.

HOMELESS COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEM DESIGN

Representatives of various state, federal and local agencies that work to assist the homeless, gathered at Capitol Lake Visitor Center in Pierre August 8-9 for a Coordinated Entry System Design Workshop. The workshop was sponsored by the South Dakota Housing Development Authority and was led by Sue Augustus and Heather Muller of the Corporation for Supportive Housing. CSH is a New York based organization that works to make housing solutions available to vulnerable people in need.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that states develop a centralized assessment system by January 23, 2018 with the goal of improving access to housing resources for the homeless. Participants at the recent Pierre workshop discussed various assessment tools that can be used to determine the needs of the homeless in South Dakota. In addition, attendees looked at methods of collecting homelessness data in South Dakota, how to prioritize housing resources for the homeless and other topics. A homeless count conducted by the South Dakota Housing for the Homeless Consortium in January 2017 found a total of 123 homeless veterans in shelters in South Dakota and seven veterans who were unsheltered.

The South Dakota Housing for Homeless Consortium meets quarterly to bring together organizations and individuals statewide to address homelessness in SD. The next SDHHC meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2017, at Pierre. Anyone interested is welcome to join SDHHC and info may be found on the webpage <http://www.housingforthehomeless.org/>. Vets@home Initiative work group is made up of Veteran's Homelessness Services Providers and Veteran's Agencies from across the state and meets bimonthly via conference call to work together with the goal of ending veteran homelessness in South Dakota.

LEADERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR SERVICE TO SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS

County and tribal veterans' service officers (CTVSO) and staff from the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA) were recognized for their dedication to serving veterans and veterans' families at an awards program Monday, Aug. 14, in Pierre.

The annual event, organized by the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, was held in conjunction with the veterans' benefits training conference for CTVSOs.

"Our SDDVA employees, our county and tribal veterans service officers and their staff are not only the backbone of our Department; they are the lifeline for all veterans," said Larry Zimmerman, SDDVA secretary. "Veterans, military personnel, and their families have a place to go for help and these individuals who were recognized are the best of the best. Congratulations to all and thanks for being there when it counts."



"Life is busy personally and professionally, as such we often neglect to recognize the individual contributions that strengthen the greater good," said Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard. "While all county and tribal veterans service officers and employees of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs work tirelessly each day to impact the lives of veterans, there are always those who shine. These awardees are recognized and chosen by their peers as setting the example in how we contribute positively toward the lives of veterans and their families."

Jamie Guffey, veterans service caseworker for Pennington County, was awarded the 2017 Partner of the Year award. Guffey was recognized for her compassion, commitment, knowledge and professionalism when assisting South Dakota's veterans.

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Sec. Zimmerman presents award to Jamie Guffey

LEADERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR SERVICE TO SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS (CONTINUED)

Manaja Hill, tribal veterans service officer for Standing Rock Sioux Tribe received the 2017 Outreach of the Year award. Manaja has been instrumental in growing the veterans services footprint within their area. He has been a leader working to find solutions for Native American Veterans to secure housing and home loans, and along the way building relations with local, state and national leaders.



Sec. Zimmerman presents award to Susan Irons

Susan Irons, veterans service officer for Lincoln and Union Counties, received the 2017 County Veterans Service Officer of the Year award. Susan was recognized for her outstanding commitment to veterans, her compassion to enhance the lives of our veterans by securing their benefits in a timely fashion and for growing her outreach.

Will Huffman, SDDVA field officer for western South Dakota, was awarded the SDDVA 2017 Employee of the Year

award. Huffman was recognized for his commitment to the Department's partners. "My nickname for Will is 'Bulldog,'" said Zimmerman. "Like a bulldog, he is faithful, protective and devoted to his family of veterans. His tenacity for mentoring and learning equals a great foundation for caring for our veterans and their families. He adjusts his calendar to help all veterans at every opportunity."

Former VSO's Ken Irwin (Custer County), Bill Locken (Lawrence County), Pat Kroupa (Minnehaha County), and Harlen Shaw (Potter County) were recognized by the County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers Association for their years of service to South Dakota's veterans.

Kathy Lindekugel, front desk manager for the Ramkota Hotel in Pierre, was recognized by the Department for her outstanding and dedicated service to the Department and their partners, as well as South Dakota's veterans.

Sen. Mike Rounds, a member of the United States Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, joined the CTVSOs and the SDDVA staff Monday evening. Rounds thanked this team of leaders for the job they do and for communicating with him and his team regarding the challenges they are facing within the VA footprint.



Huffman receives award from Sec. Zimmerman

SDVSO ASSOCIATION ELECTS LEADERSHIP

The South Dakota Veterans Service Officers Association met this week in Pierre during the annual SDDVA Benefit School.

The primary purpose of the SDVSOA is to promote and further the work of all Tribal and County Veterans Service Officers in the State of South Dakota and to ensure that all of the State's Veterans and/or their families are reached and receive the care and benefits to which they are entitled.

The 2017-2018 Association officers:

President: Gordon Richard (Spink County)

Vice President: Doug Huntrods (Lake County)

Secretary/Treasurer: Susan Irons (Lincoln and Union County)

Judge Advocate: Dennis Evenson (Deuel County)

2017-2018 District Representatives are:

District 1—Aaron Walberg (Brown County)

District 2—Ron Hoffer (Edmunds County)

District 3—Michael McDonald (Yankton County)

District 4—Angella Sutton (Meade County)

District 5—Manaja Hill (Standing Rock Sioux Tribe)



(L to R) Huntrods, Richard, Irons and Evenson



(L to R) Walberg, Sutton, Hoffer and McDonald (Hill was not available for the photo)

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman was recognized by the Association for his leadership and for his commitment to the Department, to the CTVSOs, and to the veterans of South Dakota.



Dan Cullen presents award to Sec. Zimmerman

US/ROC HONORING CEREMONY

Monday afternoon found family, friends, political leaders and advocates within the veteran network gathered in Pierre to honor 52 heroes that served in Taiwan during 1955-1979.

On behalf of the Republic of China (ROC) government, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Denver presented the "US-ROC Mutual Defense Commemorative Badge" to express the country's appreciation for their service and contributions.

The United States of America and the Republic of China established a Mutual Defense Treaty from 1955 to 1979, which defended Taiwan's democracy and freedom. Director General Jerry Chang said, "The American soldiers played a very important role in maintaining the peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait during that



Sec. Zimmerman and Dir. Chang



time and we are very grateful for all the veterans' contributions to providing assistance in Taiwan's self-defense. Taiwanese people will always remember with deep appreciation."

"It has been an honor to work side by side with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office on this ceremony," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "They recognize what these heroes have given and as a token of their sincerest appreciation they

presented them with the US-ROC Mutual Defense Commemorative Badge which symbolizes their adoration and appreciation for their service and sacrifice."

"This is a conflict not many remember, and few even know about," said Zimmerman. "We must continue to provide opportunities like this ceremony to educate all on the sacrifices made by those who serve."

In his remarks, Gov. Dugaard thanked all the veterans and their families for attending. "I'm honored to be in the presence of so many heroes who helped secure Taiwan and keep our nation safe during the Cold War. I am also happy to welcome Director General Chang to our state, and I thank him and his colleagues for recognizing our veterans and awarding them with the Republic of China Mutual Defense Commemorative Badge."

In closing, Gov. Dugaard thanked the veterans for their service, sacrifices, and for their willingness to share their stories. "Though there's no way to fully compensate for the service you have rendered, those of us here today will always remember what you have done for us," said Gov. Dugaard.

SDPB recorded the ceremony and will be making copies of the program available for veterans and their families to buy.



VETERANS DAY AT THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE FAIR

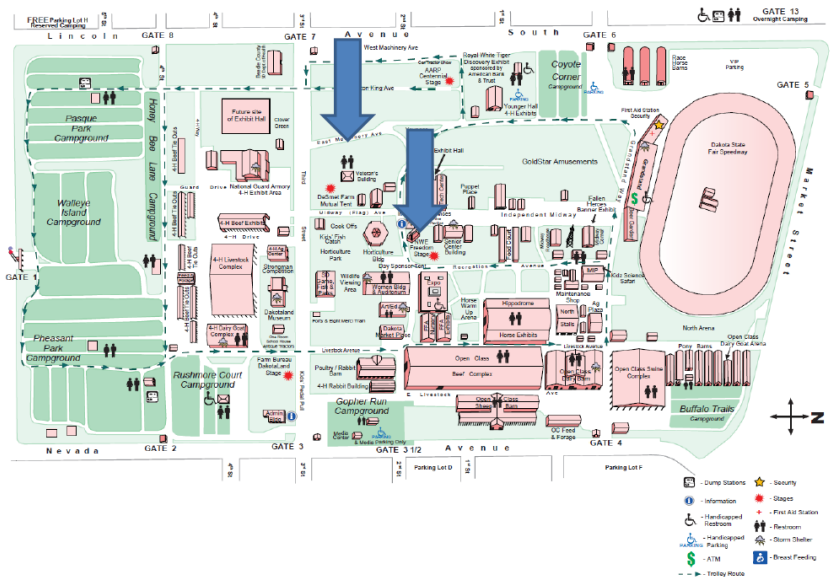
Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed Thursday, Aug. 31, 2017, as Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair, calling on all South Dakotans to honor those men and women who fought bravely for our freedoms.

At 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 31, the South Dakota State Fair will host a "Salute to Veterans" program. The program will be held on the Northwest Energy Freedom Stage (Recreation Avenue). Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will serve as the keynote speaker.

"Whether in peace or at war, the important role of our veterans cannot be denied. They are men and women from all walks of life that have one thing in common — a love for this great country," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "No matter where or when veterans have served, they've always served with distinction and their service to this country is a bridge that was built on courage, dedication and patriotism."

Representatives from the Veterans Service Organizations, the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home, as well as county veterans service officers and our Department staff will have an informational booth in the Veterans Building on Flag Avenue. Veterans are encouraged to stop by the booth and learn more about benefits and programs available to them as well.

To show appreciation for their service, the Fair will give all veterans and active military personnel free gate admission on Aug 31.



VETERANS DAY

AT THE STATE FAIR



FOWLER AND OLIVIER ATTEND NATIONAL SAA TRAINING

SDDVA's Shane Olivier and Ryan Fowler attended the National Association of State Approving Agencies Summer conference in Rhode Island this week. The theme of this year's conference was "A New Era for the GI Bill® and State Approving Agencies Accepting the Challenge."

The National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) helps make the GI Bill work. NASAA facilitates the efforts of its member State Approving Agencies (SAAs) in promoting and safeguarding quality education and training programs for veterans, ensuring greater education and training opportunities for veterans, and protecting the integrity of the GI Bill.

NASAA is made up of more than 50 state agencies nationwide that oversee education and training programs for veterans in their respective states.



—SAVE THE DATE—
November 11, 2017

 **VS.** 

MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY

Kick-Off - 2:00 p.m. | Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium

South Dakota State Athletics would like to invite all Military Personnel out for "Military Appreciation Day" as the Jackrabbits football team hosts Illinois State.

All Military Personnel will receive (2) complimentary tickets to the game (Pick-up tickets at Gate C (First Bank & Trust Entrance) the day of game)

For More Information: call 1.605.688.5422

Veterans online shopping benefit



**NEW SHOPPING BENEFIT
SALUTES OUR VETERANS**

**Coming soon: the veterans online shopping benefit —
online military exchange shopping privileges for those who served.**

What is the veterans online shopping benefit?

Starting this Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2017, honorably discharged veterans will have access to tax-free online shopping privileges at military exchanges.

What can be purchased?

Eligible veterans can purchase nearly all products on the Exchange Services' online retail environment—with the exception of uniforms, alcohol and tobacco products.

Who is eligible?

This lifetime online benefit will be available to all honorably discharged veterans of all Military Services of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Benefit begins Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

The Department of Defense is proud to extend this benefit to veterans in recognition of their service. Online shopping will also help fund quality-of-life programs, supporting service members and their families.



Check out Military OneSource for
future updates and information.
800-342-9647 • MilitaryOneSource.mil

**MILITARY
ONE SOURCE**

Veterans will need to go online and register at: <https://www.shopmyexchange.com/veterans>. On the site they will provide name, last 4 of SSN, DOB, branch of service etc. to verify their eligibility. November 11, 2017, if they have completed the online verification they should be able to shop.

Upcoming Events

Aug 31—Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair
Sept 2—DAV and 727th 13th Annual Poker Run—Brookings
Sept 8 NCPVA Pistol Shoot—Badlands Gun Range (1600 W. Russell Street—Sioux Falls)
Sept 9-10—PVA Trap Shoot—Crooks Gun Club—Sioux Falls
Sept 11—Doug Brown Memorial Pheasant Hunt (Top Gun Hunting Ranch—Howard)
Sept 11—VA Black Hills Mental Health Summit
Sept 11—Women Veterans Art Exhibit Open House—Brown County Court House—Aberdeen—4:00 pm (CST)
Sept 13—Women Veterans Art Exhibit Open House—Watertown Elks Lodge—600 E. Kemp Ave—4:00 pm
Sept 14—Watertown Veterans/First Responders Appreciation Day—SD Army National Guard, BG Ernie Edwards Readiness Center
Sept 15 POW/MIA Program—Sioux Falls Veterans Memorial Park—6:30 pm (CST)
Sept 18—Women Veterans Art Exhibit Open House—Wagner SDNG Armory—4:00 pm (CST)
Sept 22—Veterans Stand Down—VFW Post 628—Sioux Falls (3601 S. Minnesota Ave)—9:00 am (CST)
Sept 24—Gold Star Mothers Day
Sept 25—Women Veterans Art Exhibit Open House—VA Sioux Falls (2nd Floor Primary Care Addition—4:00 pm (CST)
Sept 26-28 National Women Veterans Art Exhibit—VA Sioux Falls—9:00 am—3:00 pm (CST)
Sept 25-26—Aim to Win—Hunters Pointe Shooting Complex—Humboldt
Sept 29—Women Veterans Conference—Central Baptist Church—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CST)
Oct 6-8—Fall VFW Conference—Oacoma—Cedar Shores
Oct 7—Homecomings for VFW State Commander Williamson and VFW State Auxiliary President Alm—Cedar Shores—Oacoma—6:00 pm (CT)
Nov 4—Public Agent Orange Forum—Meade County Court House in Sturgis (2nd Floor Commissioners Chambers—1300 Sherman Street) 9:00 am and 1:00 pm (MT)
Nov 9-13—VFW Disabled Veterans Hunt—Gettysburg
Nov 11—SDSU Military Appreciation Day—Kickoff at 2:00 pm (CT)
Nov 11-12—Sea of Goodwill Equine Experience Retreat—Joy Ranch—Watertown

2018

Jan 28-29—VFW Legislative Conference—Ft. Pierre
Feb 16-18 American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Oacoma
Jun 7-10—American Legion State Convention—Spearfish

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